

A darkness seen and shared

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A darkness seen and shared

by [voxofthevoid](#)

Summary

What would have happened if Will Graham and Hannibal Lecter first met each other when they were both hunting the same man, for entirely different reasons?

Attracting the attention of one psychopath is bad enough. Attracting two and for entirely different reasons... now that was just bloody rotten luck.

Notes

I read a couple of stories in which Will and Hannibal first met while they were out hunting and the idea stuck. Here's my take on the concept.

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

- Translation into Русский available: [Тьма, которую я вижу и разделяю](#) by [Gays_Lover](#)

First Meetings

Jeremy Morgan was an average guy. Plain, mild-mannered, hard-working and quite devoted to his wife and two kids. At least, that was how most of his friends and colleagues saw him. Behind closed doors, he was another person entirely. His wife- a timid woman who was far too dependent on her husband- never had the courage to stop him. All she did was try to protect the children from their father and even then, she failed miserably.

Jeremy, who was a plumber, also had an unfortunate tendency to leave muddy boot prints on the expensive rugs of his clients' homes.

*

Will Graham had never been a social person. But even now, he couldn't quite pinpoint when he went from being antisocial to being a homicidal sociopath. He blamed a part of it on his childhood obsession with murder mysteries and his empathy. Even as a child, he had been more interested in the crime, the way it was committed and the perpetrator, than the other aspects of it. Most of the 'heroes' of such stories had bored him. As he grew older and his empathy got stronger, he found he could get inside the killers' head- see and feel the crime from their perspective- all too easily.

He understood their reasons. He could *feel* their passion. He could appreciate their methods. And more importantly, he could learn from their mistakes. To him, the minds of killers were a nice retreat from his father's abuse. The man had blamed his mother's death on him. And he had suffered quite a bit for it.

It wasn't really much of a surprise when he ended up killing his father.

As for his... *fascination* with blood, he blamed that entirely on the way his father's blood sprayed hot and wet across his lips when Will slashed his throat. The *taste* had stayed with him long after.

Of course, he knew he was a monster. Accepted and embraced it. Revelled in the sense of power it gave him.

But he was a monster who chose his victims carefully. Molesters, rapists, robbers, pedophiles... the list went on, but he did have quite a soft spot for child-abusers, thanks to his own history.

So, naturally, he had quite *grand* plans for Jeremy Morgan.

*

It was quite rare for Hannibal to have his chosen prey slip from his grasp. A few times, he'd had to remove names from his rolodex because his quarry had died or gone abroad before he could end their undeserving existence. Such incidents were rare and far in between.

So he was understandably surprised when he arrived at Jeremy Morgan's little cabin in the woods- how convenient- only to see the man strung from the ceiling on fishing hooks, no less. His torso was covered in several lacerations- some deep, some shallow- that were evidently made by someone who knew what they were doing. They bled sluggishly and there was a suspiciously *low* amount of blood on the wooden floor beneath the man. Morgan was dead, though only recently it seemed.

All of this flitted through his mind in a matter of seconds and was filed away for later contemplation. The other presence in the cabin definitely required more attention.

The first thing that struck Hannibal was how immaculately clean he was. The only indication that he was responsible for Morgan's demise- and he most certainly was- was the splatter of blood drops on gloved hands. He looked harmless enough, with tamed brown curls and a boyishly handsome face that screamed *prey* instead of predator. An excellent ruse.

He felt whatever ire he'd felt at this new development be drained away only to be replaced by curiosity.

The other was intently gazing at Morgan but there was a stillness to him that suggested Hannibal's presence had not gone unnoticed. Finally, he turned, startling blue eyes-specked with some grey- meeting Hannibal's gaze.

"I suppose you're a bit miffed I got here first."

Hannibal kept his amusement to himself when he replied, "I'm not pleased my time was wasted, no." *And the meat.* Good thing his freezer wasn't completely empty just yet. The stranger grinned cheekily at him, taking a few steps forward, intently studying his face. Something in that stare seemed to penetrate deep into him. He usually had no problem with eye contact, others seeing only what he wanted them to, but he had the strangest feeling that this one saw a lot more than he intended. It wasn't a particularly pleasant feeling.

"May I ask your reason for this late night visit to dear departed Mr. Morgan here?" he asked Hannibal, mockingly drawling the dead man's name, his distaste for him all too evident.

He contemplated on his reply for a second before deciding to go with honesty. Something about this killer intrigued him, which was rare.

"He was rather rude."

"Rude? I see."

"And what brought you here?" Hannibal inquired, certain that no one else shared his rather unusual method of choosing his victims. And this man didn't seem like one to choose randomly.

He received a non committal shrug in response as the other turned to gaze at Morgan's limp body once more. "I think our society can do quite well without child-abusers and wife-beaters."

"A vigilante, then." He stated, allowing some of his mirth to leak into his voice.

Beautiful blue eyes locked on to him once again with that observation, seeming decidedly *un*-amused. "No," their owner replied, "Just a different breed of monster."

*

Will didn't know why he allowed himself to be dragged into this mess. A serial killer teaching in the FBI was risky enough, but doing field work was simply reckless and just bad news all around.

Then again, he'd never been able to tame his impulse to flirt with danger.

Besides, he had long since perfected the art of playing the 'broken, unstable little Will Graham'. It not only provided him with a perfect excuse to avoid socializing but also stopped others from looking at him *too* closely. He usually shunned human company because he found most others dull and transparent. Exceptions were rare and most bored him after a while anyway. Besides, the most recent person who interested him had been a fellow predator he'd 'met' in Jeremy Morgan's cabin nearly a year ago. His chances of running into *him* again were fairly slim.

It was with his façade firmly in place that he entered Jack's office and it took every ounce of self-restraint he'd ever possessed not to let it drop when he saw who was waiting for him inside.

*

It took him longer than usual to ascertain that William Graham was indeed none other than the man who'd stolen Morgan from him months ago. This scruffy, tense, shifty-eyed mess of a man seemed nothing like the graceful hunter who'd looked right at home in the midst of restrained violence.

Their introduction was... intense, the tension so thick you could cut into it with a knife. And Jack Crawford seemed to attribute it to Graham's anti-social tendencies. Foolish man.

Hannibal couldn't entirely contain the thrill he felt about Graham's empathy. Such a lovely gift...

Manipulation was a play at subtlety and being a master himself, he could see and truly appreciate how easily Graham worked Crawford and how the head of BAU was blind to it all. He could see how every single detail of this version of Will Graham, from the slouched posture to the absolute avoidance of eye-contact- was a carefully constructed farce meant to

trick others into viewing him as nothing more than a socially awkward but harmless teacher with a unique mind.

“Tasteless,” he muttered, eyes narrowed in annoyance at the mention of the article on *Tattlecrime*, and Hannibal gladly took the opening provided.

“Do you have trouble with taste?”

“My thoughts are often not *tasty*.” Perhaps to most others, but he was certain that the profiler’s thoughts would be very interesting.

“Nor mine. No effective barriers.”

“I build forts.”

“Associations come quickly.”

“So do forts.”

Jack looked back and forth between them, obviously befuddled by their exchange. Hannibal fought back a smile. He owed Crawford for this *delightful* opportunity.

“Not fond of eye-contact, are you?” he asked, unable to resist poking the lion a little. Though he’d have loved to do it in private so that he could see its claws and bring out his own.

“Eyes are distracting. You see too much, you don’t see enough. And it’s hard to focus when you’re thinking ‘those whites are really white or they must have hepatitis or is that a burst vein’. So I try to avoid eyes-” He suddenly locked gazes with Hannibal, a clear answer to the veiled challenge and continued, “- whenever possible.”

Hannibal knew that that was not all Graham would see in another’s eyes. He knew that a single glance would be enough to bare one’s soul to the empath. A heavy burden and a useful tool at the same time. For a second, he let the monster inside of him peek out, curious to see the reaction that’d elicit. He wasn’t disappointed when the blue eyes boring into his own darkened until they were similar to what he’d seen that day at the cabin. The whole exchange passed in mere seconds with Jack none the wiser.

Idly, he wondered how this would be like if the two of them were alone.

“I imagine what you see and learn touches everything else in your mind. Your values and decency are present yet shocked at your associations, appalled at your dreams. No forts in the bone area of your skull for the things you love.”

To his credit, Will did not so much as bat an eyelash at the ridiculous assertions though the urge to laugh must have been there. Instead, adopting an expression of extreme irritation, Will said, “Whose profile are you working on?” then, to Jack, “Whose profile is he working on?”

Hannibal answered before the other could, “I’m sorry, Will. Observing is what we do. I can’t shut mine off anymore than you can shut yours off.”

“Please don’t psychoanalyze me. You won’t like me when I’m psychoanalyzed.” He doubted that very much and watched with a minute smile as the younger man rushed out of the room after mumbling something about a lecture.

Fascinating.

He couldn’t wait to meet him *alone*.

Will didn’t stop until he reached his empty classroom. He hadn’t been lying about the lecture, but he had a few minutes before the students arrived. Once inside, he began laughing, replaying the events in Jack’s office.

Dr Hannibal Lecter was quite... *interesting*.

*

The first word that crossed Will Graham’s mind as he stared at the body on the field was ‘*Beautiful.*’

And it was. Gorgeous. A gift. For him.

It was oddly flattering.

It was almost a struggle to fake being upset as he told Jack this was a different killer. It truly was a lovely gift. How very thoughtful of the doctor. The opportunity to drink in such a beautiful display was priceless, especially after his rather long absence from the field.

It was with great difficulty that he wrenched his eyes and mind away from the scene to focus on Jack, who was being irritatingly impatient once again. It was like he expected Will to take one look at the scene and magically know who the killer was (which he did in this case, but he had no intention whatsoever of revealing that).

His tone was deliberately suggestive as he told Jack to get Lecter to write up a profile. He wanted the doctor involved in this and he was quite sure that the man wanted the same.

He didn’t stay longer than necessary at the scene. Jack probably thought he was disturbed by the morbid display, but Will just really needed to be *alone* in his mind. He couldn’t wait to get back to his room and relive the scene- *really* appreciate it for the *exquisite* piece of art it was- without any interference whatsoever.

That night, Will’s dreams featured the torn body of Cassie Boyle, only it was *his* fingers that cut her open and ripped out her lungs from the still warm body, *his* lips that tasted the hot nectar that was her blood, *his* teeth that tore into her flesh and *devoured*.

He woke up in a pool of sweat, panting, exhilarated and so very *hard*.

*

He opened the door fully expecting to see Jack there, but was pleasantly surprised to find Lecter instead. Not that he was complaining, especially not with the tingling pleasure from yesterday's field kabuki and his own dream still in his system.

He didn't bother pretending to be anything but what he was once the door was closed behind the psychiatrist. What was the point? So he allowed what he knew to a slightly disconcerting (to normal people) smile to grace his features as he watched the man. He so rarely got to be himself amongst others- at least among those who were not soon-to-be corpses- and the feeling was surprisingly refreshing.

Then, he did something that generally avoided like the plague. He looked straight into Lecter's eyes. To both his disappointment and delight, they were completely blank. Lecter was regarding him with an amused smile of his own.

"That was quite the gift, Dr Lecter. I'm flattered." He told the older man, eyes curiously flicking to the container he held in his hands. Had he brought *breakfast*?

"Please Will, call me Hannibal. I don't see the need for such petty formalities between us. And I'm quite glad you liked it," he replied casually, as if they weren't referring to the brutal murder of a young girl. "I've brought breakfast."

"Trying to convert me?" Will shot back, as Hannibal arranged the food on the table, knowing full well what type of meat he was being served. It didn't take a genius to guess, really. But he couldn't really fault the man for his proclivities. Will's own were hardly natural.

The only response he received was another smile. To his credit, the food really was amazing and Will told him as much between mouthfuls of egg and Cassie Boyle.

"Never thought human flesh would taste this good." Pity they weren't at his house. He had just the thing to go with this and he was quite certain Hannibal would appreciate it as well.

Hannibal inclined his head modestly at the praise but not before Will caught the flash of pride in his eyes. Silence reigned between them as Will ate his fill, the older man's eyes focused almost obscenely on him the entire time. Will had to resist putting on a show; he could broadcast his not so platonic interest in the man later. For now, he had more important things to ascertain. Like what precisely the fellow sociopath wanted from him.

He was, however, surprised when Hannibal abruptly dragged Jack into the conversation. "Uncle Jack sees you as a fragile little teacup that is only brought out for special guests."

Will snorted though it was a quite accurate description of how Jack viewed him. He wondered if Hannibal was pleased at being such a 'special guest'. Probably.

“I see no harm in letting Jack have his pretty little delusions. Tell me though, how do *you* see me?”

“The mongoose I want under the house when the snake slithers by.” He replied and Will raised an eyebrow at the strange comparison. A *mongoose*? “Finish your breakfast, Will.”

And so he did, keeping his eyes locked with Hannibal’s the entire time.

*

He didn’t quite know what about Garret Jacob Hobbs stood out, but neither did he care. He had long since learned to trust his instincts, strange as they often were. Logic had little to do with his ‘gift’.

He was also pretty damn sure that Hannibal wasn’t actually that clumsy, but he said nothing as the man went back inside and returned rather quickly. There was something off here, but he didn’t quite know what. He had a feeling he’d find out soon enough.

And he did, the second he saw Mrs. Hobbs- and it had to be Mrs. Hobbs- stumble out of the house, her hands clutching her torn throat. Hannibal had warned Hobbs. *Why* he did that, Will didn’t know and he didn’t have the time to find out just then, but the two of them would be having a nice little conversation on the subject in the near future.

He walked past the woman, barely paying any attention to her, and made his way inside, gun drawn, with the doctor close on his heels. Garrett Jacob Hobbs’ emotions slammed into him as he stepped into the kitchen where the man held a teenage girl with a knife pressed to her throat.

Daughter. Mine. Love. Mine. Can’t lose her. Mine. Mine. Mine.

It was heady and intoxicating, an all consuming, obsessive love that defied all reason. It made his hands shake as he shot the man over and over, though not in time to prevent him from slashing the girl’s throat.

It took him a few more seconds to completely shove away Hobbs’ feelings and get to the injured girl. He cradled the girl in his hands, looking into her large blue eyes, wide with fear and a new hope.

Will held her with care, gently brushing her hair away from her face in a strangely paternal gesture as the life drained out of her. He watched with a tender smile as the hope in her eyes flickered out only to be replaced by despair and resignation as she realized that he was not going to save her, that he wasn’t even trying to staunch the bleeding.

When she was gone, he simply closed her eyes and carefully lowered her limp body to the floor, as if she were made of glass. He felt an echo of regret- Hobbs’, not his- as he took in her lifeless form, but he paid it no mind.

He'd long since learned to absorb only what he wanted from others, especially murderers. And Hobbs had little to offer him. Will didn't love his victims and most certainly didn't want to.

But for some reason, he kept feeling flashes of affection tinged with grief that weren't his own each time he looked at the fallen girl. It seemed like Hobbs had a very *forceful* personality.

He stood up and turned around, coming face to face with Hannibal who was watching the scene with undisguised curiosity in those exotic eyes. Will gave the man a slow, deliberate nod which he acknowledged with a slight twist of his head.

They would talk about all this. Soon.

What is your design?

Chapter Summary

In which Hannibal and Will try to decide what they want from each other. There's flirting and psychoanalysis.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Pure empathy.

He's had it for as long as he could remember. It was so *hard* at first, like drowning in air, perpetually assaulted by emotions and memories that couldn't have been his but felt as if they were. It hadn't taken him long to realize that his mind favored darker emotions- hatred, rage, bloodlust- over others. They were drawn in by his hungry mind like a twister sucked in everything it touched. He had contemplated suicide numerous times, his moral compass overwrought by the filthy impulses it had to fight off on a regular basis.

He'd wasted many years trying to ignore the part of his mind that savored every single one of these dark, twisted thoughts as if they were the finest of wines. He'd tried so hard not to listen to the voice in his mind- very much his own- that insisted that he liked those impulses, reveled in them even. That voice had been so very seductive.

Giving in had been the sweetest surrender.

*

There were few things that could genuinely surprise Will. The thunderous applause of his students that greeted him when he walked into his lecture hall that day was one of them. He didn't have to fake embarrassment as he told them to stop. It was ironic, how, despite his numerous kills and theatric displays, he was being celebrated for a sloppy, bland utterly *tasteless* kill. No wonder he hated people.

He knew, from the expression on Dr Bloom's face as she approached him that she had unsavory news to deliver. He was pretty sure it was about certain... recent events.

"Hi."

"How are you, Will?" she asked, genuine concern lacing her words. How cute.

"I have no idea." *Pretty damn fine, actually.*

“That may change. I didn’t want you to be ambushed.”

“Is this an ambush?” he doubted that, but it didn’t hurt to ask.

“Ambush is later. Immediately later, soon to *now*. When Jack arrives, consider yourself ambushed.”

Speak of the devil.

“Here’s Jack.” He pointed out, unnecessarily.

“How was class?” the large man asked, not even bothering to feign interest.

“They applauded. It was inappropriate.”

Will didn’t care all that much about the commendation and he was expecting to return to the field. The psych-eval was bothersome, but Alana was all too easy to manipulate. But the news that *Hannibal Lecter* was going to take care of it... now *that* was interesting.

“But if you’d be more comfortable with Dr Bloom-” he cut Jack off before he could finish, effortlessly hiding just how *excited* he was at the new development.

“I’m not going to be comfortable with anybody inside my head.”

The rest of the conversation went predictably. Alana was her sweet and sympathetic self. Jack was a hard-headed asshole. The usual.

At least he managed to hide his glee at the sheer ridiculousness of the whole situation until he was alone.

*

Will Graham made no effort to hide the fact that he was studying Hannibal. Not for the first time, he wished he could tear into that *unique* mind until all its secrets were laid bare to him. Hannibal had been both anticipating and dreading this encounter ever since that day in the Hobbs’ house. Yet, neither of them had spoken a word beyond the usual, meaningless pleasantries and Hannibal found he was reluctant to break the contemplative silence. It was fascinating really, how Will switched so easily from unstable profiler to dangerous predator.

It was Will who finally spoke, inclining his head at the papers in front of Hannibal.

“What’s that?”

“Your psychological evaluation. You’re totally functional and more or less sane. Well done.” Technically, it was true. Will was perfectly functional. As for sanity, well, that was a matter of perspective.

A cold, but amused smile curled the empath’s lips, “Did you just rubber stamp me?”

“Jack Crawford may lay his wary head knowing he didn’t break you and our conversation can proceed, unobstructed by paperwork.”

He regarded Hannibal intensely for a second before responding.

“Uncle Jack thinks I need therapy.” He said with a light chuckle and Hannibal smiled back at him. The very thought that therapy could do anything to help one such as Will Graham was ridiculous.

“He might believe it can help you find a way out of the dark places he sends you to.”

Will huffed out a laugh, blue-gray eyes boring into Hannibal’s.

“Pity he doesn’t know how much I *like* those dark places.”

He watched with interest as Will detached himself from where he was leaning against the wall and prowled- there was really no other word for it- across the room to him. It took considerable effort not to react to the younger man’s predatory air, but Hannibal was well versed in self-restraint. The profiler stopped in front of his desk and placed both arms on top of it, leaning forward well into Hannibal’s personal place. On another, he would’ve found it extremely rude. But with Will, he was... *thrilled*.

“What is your design, Dr Lecter?” Will’s question was abrupt, his voice low and wondering. Hannibal could see a reflection of the very same curiosity that plagued him in the empath’s eyes.

“You already know my design Will.” It was harder than usual to keep his voice neutral and his face blank, but he managed it nonetheless.

“I know the Chesapeake Ripper. I know the Copycat killer... but I want to *know* Hannibal Lecter.” Will’s voice dropped lower until his name was a throaty purr on his lips. Hannibal found himself hopelessly mesmerized by that oceanic gaze, not fearing an intrusion. But there was no way he could stop the tremor that coursed through him at the younger man’s words.

Abruptly, Will backed away and settled on the chair opposite him, some of that enticing, menacing aura lifting off him. Hannibal immediately missed it.

“Why’d you warn Hobbs?”

The sudden change in subject was jarring, but Hannibal played along easily.

“I was curious to see what would happen.”

Will smiled, though there was nothing even remotely pleasant about it.

“Curious... you wanted me to kill in public.”

It wasn’t a question, but Hannibal nodded anyway.

“Was it a test, Dr Lecter? Or was it another gift?” Will leaned forward in his chair, eyes hard and appraising.

“Perhaps it was both, William,” he replied, delighted at the mixture of rage and mirth that flashed in the younger man’s eyes. Will was both angered by his interference and amused by his motivations.

Will Graham truly was something else.

“Lonely much, doctor?” the question wasn’t mocking as one might expect, but equal parts curious and amused. Nonetheless, Hannibal froze at the query. He wasn’t lonely, per se, but the sentiment was close to what he was experiencing. He’d not expected Will to catch on so soon. The empath was visibly pleased by Hannibal’s lack of a proper response and he fought down a flicker of irritation tinged with admiration.

His plans to manipulate Will were rapidly fading into nothingness. The man was far too perceptive.

He didn’t push the topic further and Hannibal was more than willing to let the matter rest. There were far more interesting things to be discussed.

“Why did you let Abigail Hobbs die? I would have thought, given your foray into Garrett Jacob Hobbs’ mind and his love for his daughter, that you would feel compelled to save her life.”

Will’s lips twisted into a lopsided smile and he seemed genuinely amused at the observation. Pretty much everything seemed to amuse the profiler. The silence stretched on for a while before he received a response.

“Do you really think I’d have survived this long if I gave in to every murderer happily occupying my headspace?” Will gave a small snort of laughter at the thought. Then, he leaned back and closed his eyes. His words, when they came, had a pensive quality to them. “I did feel the compulsion to save her. Her father’s love for her had a life of its own. It was... all-consuming.”

Will was a sight to behold when he was lost in his mind and Hannibal was once again hit by that overwhelming urge to crawl into his mind and see the world through his eyes.

“If I had saved Abigail-” the name was a soft, loving whisper, “- I would most probably have loved her as if she were my own. I would have loved her like Garrett Jacob Hobbs loved her. I would have killed her too, one day. It would have been... inevitable. And it would’ve complicated things needlessly.”

“You mean, she would have been a liability.” Hannibal supplied and Will’s eyes flashed open. He nodded, once, jerkily before continuing,

“Hobbs has a very forceful personality; even now, I’m not fully free of him. It took a lot for me to push him aside and let her die. It was beautiful, though. She was truly beautiful in

death..." he blinked once and was fully himself again. He gave Hannibal a rueful smile, as if apologizing for his momentary lapse.

"You know, she assisted her father in killing those girls." He was sure Will knew this already. Jack certainly suspected. "She would have been a fitting daughter for you." *And me.* He knew he would have saved the girl had Will shown any such inclination. As it was, he'd been mesmerized by how Will- covered in the blood of the man he'd killed- had held her so lovingly, uncaring as the life bled out of her. The sight had been *exquisite*.

"No, she wouldn't have." Will disagreed. "Abigail was a survivor, but not a predator. Not like you and me. She's too wild, too impulsive. It would have been a disaster."

Hannibal was helplessly impressed- and maybe a little enthralled- once again by that stunning mind and its owner.

How would he ever repay Jack for this?

Will glanced at his watch and rose to his feet, "I guess it's time for me to leave. Goodbye, *Hannibal.*"

He smiled- sharp and feral- at Will's deliberately intimate use of his given name.

Will mirrored the expression.

There was a taut tension between them as he escorted the younger man to the door that spoke of delightful things to come.

*

It certainly wasn't the first time a serial killer had sought Will out, but it was the first time one had shown up on his doorstep. It wasn't an experience he was keen to repeat. Although, he could certainly understand Eldon Stammers' desire to approach someone who could understand him.

Will had been tempted to just kill him, mostly because he knew he could get away with it. Self-defense.

But in the end, he didn't.

There was something heady and liberating about a kill he didn't have to hide- *thank you, Hannibal*- but it wouldn't do to get used to that. It might make him sloppy and he already risked it by juggling around so many killers in his head.

Jack sounded uncharacteristically sympathetic on the phone. Maybe it was because Will's pseudo-panic on the phone was just that convincing. Or maybe he just didn't want to break his favorite toy too early.

At least it was *fun*. Sympathetic Jack was easy(ier) - to - manipulate Jack. Will made sure to add a generous amount of weight to the guilt the man already wore like a cloak as he personally 'assured' Jack that he was fine. It was the little things, really. Brief moments of panic in his eyes, avoiding eye-contact more than usual, subtly flinching away from even the slightest of movements... things like that. Small cues most wouldn't even notice. Jack wasn't most people. He was a pretty good agent. He noticed. He understood. He did nothing. He felt guilty for doing nothing.

Fun, indeed.

Jack left shortly after they took a bleeding and unconscious Stammets away, with a suggestion that he should see Dr Lecter again. Therapy would help him.

Will did a pretty commendable job of hiding his mirth. For someone who hunted psychopaths, Jack had a habit of trusting them blindly for no particular reason.

But he was pretty glad for the excuse to visit Hannibal again.

*

As he finally lay down to get some sleep, he let go of the tight control he'd been exerting on Hobbs' presence in his mind. He'd long since learned that if he tried to suppress them for too long, it would only bring trouble later. So he just *let go* and allowed the emotions to wash over him in their true capacity.

Love. Obsessive and overpowering love for his daughter. His world.

Anger. That she was leaving, slipping away... abandoning him.

Anguish. Knowing he had to kill her; wanting desperately to protect her.

They consumed him, filling his mind with all the images of the girl he'd ever seen and even more that his imagination provided. Images of hunting beside her merged with teaching her how to fish. He helped her tie lures as he showed her how to gut animals. Domestic scenes with her and her mother turned into images of her playing with his dogs.

That night, Abigail Hobbs haunted his dreams.

*

When he woke up, the intense pressure in his mind from the pent up feelings were gone, but tendrils of emotions from the previous night remained. He had not been kidding when he told Hannibal that Hobbs had a forceful personality.

He was... frustrated. Greatly.

He would need to kill soon.

Chapter End Notes

There you go! I've already finished writing the next chapter, but I haven't typed it yet. We'll get to see Will kill again!

Kudos and comments are much appreciated. Feel free to point out any errors.

A passion so dark...

Chapter Summary

Will visits Hannibal again, Marissa's luck runs out and two psychopaths fall in love (sort of).

Hannibal Lecter was a solitary creature. He was not anti-social- far from it actually, with his dinner parties and philanthropic works- but he had never felt the urge to let anyone else into his life. His true self was always hidden beneath the human veil and those who did glimpse underneath it generally ended up on his dinner table.

Until Will Graham, that is.

It wasn't that he was lonely, at least not in the usual definition of the word. As a matter of fact, before Will, with his empathy and delicious darkness, came into his life, he had not even entertained any thoughts of companionship. It wasn't as if he could find a partner like normal people, with his unusual proclivities.

But Will was... different. Special. A being of pure empathy, capable of assuming anyone's mindset, with a penchant for the darkest of minds. Yet, he managed to maintain firm holds over his own mind and personality.

It was no wonder that Hannibal was intrigued. Perhaps obsessively so.

Maybe, if Will had not embraced his own darkness, things would have been different. Then, perhaps, he truly would have been unstable and broken like the persona he presented to Jack and the others. But even then, Hannibal is sure that Will would've captured his interest, if in a somewhat different capacity.

Because Will- *only* Will- had the capacity to *see*, to understand him. *All* of him. And that was an opportunity Hannibal simply couldn't pass up.

*

Will didn't know what possessed him to go to Hannibal's house instead of his office. Yes, it was quite past office hours now, but that delay was completely intentional on his part. He was curious, though, to see the man in his home turf. While he had no doubt that the office was his playground as well, there was a certain thrill he felt at the thought of observing this predator in his own home.

Hannibal opened the door just a few seconds after he knocked and if he was surprised to find Will on his doorstep, he didn't show it. If anything, he seemed pleased.

"Will! Please, come in," he said and stepped aside, still holding the door open. With a smile, Will entered, deliberately brushing against the psychiatrist as he did so.

"I was about to cook. Would you care to join me in the kitchen?" Hannibal asked as he closed the door, not even bothering to ask why Will had shown up unannounced at his house. Had Jack called him again?

"Of course."

Hannibal's house was pretty much like he expected. Refined, elegant and quite impersonal. The furnishings and numerous artworks that adorned the place certainly suited the man, but they told you nothing about the person under the veil.

The kitchen, though, was another matter entirely. The second he stepped inside, he could see that this was the heart of the house. It had a warmth that the rest of it lacked. He liked the place.

Immersed in his observations, it took him a while to realize that Hannibal was talking to him.

"I'm sorry, what?" he asked, turning to face the man in question, only to find that he had shed his coat and vest and was now clad in a simple beige shirt with the sleeves rolled up to his elbows, a white apron tied around his waist.

It was a *very* nice sight.

Hannibal smiled, though Will didn't know if it was at his words or at the thoughts he made no effort to hide.

"Jack Crawford called me." Ah, just as he thought. "He told me about Stammets. Once again, he wants me to make sure that you are sane and functional so that he can have a clear conscience."

"Jack needs his beauty sleep." Will said with a snort, indulging in a brief fantasy of choking the life out of Jack as rage and betrayal flashed in his eyes. "So you've been expecting me?"

Hannibal just smiled as he set about slicing... something.

"Apparently, I'm like catnip to serial killers." Will added as he went to lean against a wall where he could stay out of the way and still watch Hannibal cook. Which was a bit like porn, really. The man was so completely in his element here that every moment was *sensual*.

"This has happened before?"

"On record, no. Most of it was when I was a cop. And that was all before Freddie's lovely little article on me. I dread to think of what will happen now." He wanted the attention of only one killer and that man was currently in the room with him, expertly mincing meat and looking rather... edible. No pun intended, of course.

“You are a complex creature, Will Graham. I don’t quite understand you.” And he already had that particular person’s attention, so why bother with other lowlife?

“The feeling is mutual.” He was sure that there was more to this man than the Ripper or the Copycat. The beauty he created from death was an important facet of him, but it was still just a facet. It wasn’t enough for him to put together a full picture of Hannibal Lecter. He was missing pieces.

“The Chesapeake Ripper views his victims as swine. He takes their organs because he views them as pigs unworthy of them. Their very existence is offending to him. They’re not people to him, simply food.” Will kept his eyes on the doctor as he recited his profile of the Ripper. “Am I right so far?” he asked unnecessarily, knowing full well that he was.

“I can understand why you kill the rude,” he continued when no reply was forthcoming. “But why do you eat them?” Will’s taste for blood had no particular reason behind it but something told him that the basis for Hannibal’s cannibalism went far beyond simple fascination or curiosity.

Only silence greeted him. Apparently, the reason behind it was a bit sensitive. Time to venture into safer waters then.

“But the Ripper isn’t your only persona. He’s just an excuse for you to display your art and humiliate your prey. And Cassie Boyle was killed as a gift to me, to help me see the Shrike’s face. I have no doubt that you have more victims. Where are the others? Are they hidden, never to be found? Or are they camouflaged as ordinary, everyday deaths?

Hannibal finally turned to face him, a feral smile on his face and eyes much darker than he’d seen before. The monster inside was finally showing his face. Will grinned in sheer delight.

“You really do have an exceptional mind, William.” He purred, locking gazes with Will. The doctor did have impressive control over his own mind, to keep Will from *accidentally* being drawn inside. What would happen if he tried it on purpose? With permission, of course.

Would he drown-as he often did- or would he finally soar?

“Perhaps I shall tell you one day.” Will jerked out of his thoughts at Hannibal’s softly-spoken words. He knew instantly that they referred to the enigmatic reason behind the man’s cannibalism.

Will grinned at the near-promise and leaned more comfortably against the wall. He could wait.

“So, who’s for dinner?”

*

Will wasn’t quite sure *why* he was in Minnesota again. He had no business here; Jack did plan to do a more detailed search of Hobbs’ cabin later on, but that was no reason for him

‘visit’ the Hobbs’ house again. At least no other reason than the annoying frustration that had gripped him after those damned dreams.

Yet, there he was, standing in the very spot where Abigail Hobbs had bled to death in his arms. He sighed. A part of him regretted letting her die. The logical part of him knew that was the safe thing to do. She’d only have been a *liability*, as Hannibal had so aptly put it. But you couldn’t be an empath and rely completely on logic. So, he still felt her loss. He didn’t like how much Garrett Jacob Hobbs affected him. It had been a very long time since a killer other than himself had taken up residence in his brain like this. True, he had exercised most of the man, but that obsession still lingered.

Now, what was to be done about that?

Oh, who was he kidding, he knew exactly what he was going to do. All he had to do was find the right person.

So when the girl barged into the kitchen, face set into an expression of seething irritation, he felt like fate was gifting him.

“Who the fuck are you, you creep?” she spat out, tossing back her hair- so much like Abigail’s- and putting both hands on her hips in a futile effort to be intimidating.

“I’m with the F.B.I,” he replied, flashing his badge in a way that hid his ‘Special Agent’ status. He also didn’t want her to learn his name if he could avoid it. “And who are you?”

“Marissa Schurr. I’m a neighbor. Now, what the hell are you doing here?”

A neighbor... how interesting. He wondered why she had survived so very long right under Garrett Jacob Hobbs nose.

“You do realize this case is not closed yet, don’t you Miss Schurr?” he drawled in a deliberate tone that was just short of patronizing. “Did you know Abigail Hobbs?”

“Yeah, I knew her. I was her best friend.” *Ah, that’d explain why you’re still alive.*

“Why are *you* here, Miss Schurr?” he asked, putting just the right amount of authority into his voice to ensure an answer. It worked. She answered, frowning.

“I saw you entering the house and thought you were a creep like the bitches that painted that shit outside.”

“Hm. I wasn’t planning on talking to the neighbors, but since you’re here, can you answer a few questions?”

She frowned again, but nodded and leaned back against the wall.

“Yeah, whatever. Make it quick, though. My mom doesn’t know I’m here and the bitch would throw a fucking hissy fit if she finds out.”

Will held back a grimace at the girl's words. How very rude. Hannibal would certainly approve of this choice, which was good, given how he intended for her to be a gift for the doctor, just as Cassie had been a gift for Will.

He spent the next few minutes asking Marissa utterly pointless questions disguised as standard queries. Was there anything strange about the Hobbs? Had Abigail spent a lot of time with her father? Did she ever mention anything weird about him?

The young woman answered honestly enough, even going as far as to add that most people believed Abigail helped her father(of course she did), but that *she* thought it was total bullshit.

Will left shortly after her, discreetly taking note of the house she disappeared into before getting into his rental and driving away.

He didn't go far, stopping on an isolated stretch of road and hiding the vehicle before making his way back on foot.

*

It had been so easy to hunt her down, the rebellious teenager sneaking out in the middle of the night, probably to go to some party.

The terrified recognition in her eyes when he'd cornered her had been *delicious*.

He kept her unconscious until they reached Hobbs' cabin. The place was wonderfully isolated and so very perfect. No one within the area to hear her scream. Except him.

And scream she did. Loud, terrified shouts that quieted down into pitiable little shrieks due to shock and blood loss. Those too died when he began carving out her heart. Will never administered any drugs to heighten his prey's suffering or lengthen their lives. He preferred their reactions to be more natural; reveled in each pained gasp and every tortured plea. Marissa was no exception, even though his hands were gentle, almost loving, as he cut open her chest and tore out her heart, taking care to keep it intact.

He did not drain her blood as he often did. This had to be passed off as the copycat's work after all. He still took some, of course.

Will was stronger than he looked, the bulky layers of plaid and cheap wool hiding the corded muscles and exceptional strength that his... activities required. So it took very little effort to mount the nude body of the girl on the rack of antlers, her dark hair falling forward to cover her breasts. Will needed this to be sensual, not sexual.

After he was done, he stepped back and admired his work. The stitches on her chest were barely visible and perfectly done. He was no surgeon, but he had learned as a teenager to sew skin back together and had honed the skill over the years. It wasn't like he lacked bodies to practice upon.

Satisfied with his work, Will picked up the two coolers containing his prizes and made his way out of the cabin, already picturing the reactions his work would evoke. Of course, only one person's mattered, but it would still be fun to see the look on Jack's face when he saw her.

He was grinning as he drove away.

*

Will kept the excitement pooling deep in his gut off his face as he walked into the cabin alongside Jack and Hannibal. The head of BAU had inadvertently made things easier for him by inviting the doctor. It'd saved Will the trouble of suggesting it.

There was nothing here that would help them, Will knew. Garrett Jacob Hobbs wouldn't have left behind any part of the girls he'd killed. No, he would have honored every part of them. The only thing they were going to find was dear Marissa, more beautiful in death than she could ever have been in life.

He grinned, wide and wild, hidden from Jack as a drop of blood splattered on to one of Hannibal's cheeks. How apt that it should fall on him.

They hurriedly climbed the stairs, Jack leading, and froze when she came into sight. She looked beautiful and perfect in his eyes; an offering.

He barely paid any attention to Jack when he pulled out a cell phone and murmured hastily into it, "I need ERT at the Hobbs cabin." His eyes were fixed on Hannibal, eager to gauge his reaction as the man drank in the sight before him.

Their gazes connected and Will knew that *Hannibal* knew this was a gift. Something in return for the one he'd received. Something to push this little game of theirs to the next level. The delighted spark in the doctor's eyes sent a thrill coursing through his body.

Will took a deep breath and shoved away his excitement and pleasure. He had to keep up appearances for Jack, after all. He pushed past the man and approached Marissa's body, gently raising her head to get a good look at her face. Her eyes were closed and she looked peaceful, as if she were simply sleeping. He released her and stepped back, careful not to lock eyes with Hannibal.

"She fits Hobbs' profile, Jack."

Jack was frowning, visibly vexed at this new development. Will had been right; Jack's reaction was quite entertaining. The F.B.I Agent shook his head angrily and said, "Hobbs is dead. And you said the Copycat would never kill like this again. So what the hell is this?"

Will twisted his expression into a pained grimace even as the monster inside of him howled with joy. As glad as he was that his gift was well-received, there was no denying the heady

rush he felt at the sight of his work displayed and admired. Any risk of accepting Jack's offer was worth this.

His voice was filled with frustration he didn't feel when he replied, "I said he *may* never killer like this again. Evidently, I was wrong."

No, he was not. Although, he was pretty sure that Marissa would have met her end at Hannibal's hands if the doctor had ever met her. She *was* so very rude.

"What else were you wrong about?"

He fought back a sigh, already tiring of Jack. God, the man was so fucking predictable at times. And irritating as hell.

"Whoever killed the girl in the field killed this one. I'm right about that. He knew exactly how to mount the body. Wound patterns are almost identical to Cassie Boyle. We'll need to see if this one's missing any organs. But still, the same design, the same humiliation."

Now, he did look at Hannibal, standing a little behind Jack, making no effort to hide his mirth, presumably at how Will copied the work of his Copycat persona. And as much as he wanted to grin back, he couldn't with Jack watching.

The rest of his time at the cabin was boring and pretty unremarkable, especially as Jack insisted he stay and answer totally useless queries. Still, he didn't complain, mostly because he was quite eager to see Jack and his team try and fail spectacularly to find any evidence on dear Marissa's body.

However, he managed to catch Hannibal as the other was on his way out- again per Jack's wishes- muttering a quiet, 'Come visit me tomorrow', before taking off, grinning at Hannibal's bemused smile.

*

Hannibal, being Hannibal, called him the next morning to know precisely when he was expected. Even after Will told him to come around by seven in the evening, the good doctor didn't even ask about the reason behind the abrupt invitation. And though Will was sure that he had some idea about it, he was still impressed by Hannibal's patience. It was a necessary skill for those with their hobbies, but Hannibal's had a rather preternatural feel to it. It was fascinating.

He went to work as usual, taking immense pleasure in the lovely combination of anger, frustration, impatience and *more* anger that Jack was oozing. Between Will, Hannibal and the plethora of serial killers that Maryland seemed to house, Jack would be driven to early retirement. *If* someone didn't kill him first.

Marissa's body held no clues whatsoever other than the missing heart which only cemented the theory that this was the Copycat's work. There was no progress and the science team's

annoyance was quite enjoyable.

So, naturally, by the time he got home-an hour before Hannibal was due to arrive- he was in a great mood.

The pack greeted him enthusiastically, barking and jumping over each other to get to him. It was really no wonder he preferred their company over humans'. Alive humans, that is. Dogs were easy. You gave them food, shelter, care and they gave you their loyalty and love. Humans, on the other hand, were messy, complicated creatures and his interactions with other people generally left him reeling in disgust. And most of them were so one-dimensional that it often felt like their very existence was a waste of space. Others would disagree with him, of course, but they didn't have to deal with the extremely annoying process of having to wade through the thoughts and emotions of every damn body they mingled with.

It was truly no surprise that he was so thrilled at meeting someone who was an exception to this.

Hannibal Lecter wasn't *like* Will, of course not, but they were kindred spirits. Solitary artists who preferred the same canvas. He had a feeling that Hannibal didn't find people as plain and boring as he did. Other than the ones he deemed to be pigs, the psychiatrist seemed quite interested in people. Well, the interest probably didn't bode well for the ones it was directed at, but still...

He knew, though, like he *just knew* some things, that they were compatible. He felt a sort of *connection* to the man that he'd never felt before, not even to other killers. And if Hannibal's actions were any indication, the feeling was mutual.

They've both been dancing around each other since that surprising encounter in Jack's office and Will was tiring of it.

It was high time the dance ended and the fun began.

After letting the dogs out, he showered and dressed, abandoning his usual plaid and flannel combo for one of his suits. Tonight, he had no reason to hide away behind layers. Hannibal had already seen what really lay underneath the facade. Will Graham- harmless F.B.I teacher- had no place here.

This was meant to be a meeting of monsters.

*

Hannibal was pleasantly surprised when the door to Will's home opened to reveal the version of the man he'd seen only once before. Clad in a sleek black suit(sans tie), curls somewhat tamed and slicked back with his eyes free of those hideous glasses, it was Will Graham as he'd first met him, all those months ago in Morgan's cabin.

His surprise would have gone unnoticed by most, but Will naturally picked up on it and was evidently quite delighted about it. He let Hannibal in with a flourish and closed the door behind them, taking his coat from him.

An army of dogs were scattered all over the living room and though a few made to approach Hannibal, a sharp command from Will stayed them. Well trained dogs, then.

“That’s quite a collection,” he told the empath.

“They’re strays I took in.”

Behind him, Will chuckled and he turned to see what the source of his amusement was. Will’s eyes were trained on the Tupperware container he held. They flicked to Hannibal’s, twinkling.

“Of course, you’d bring food.” There was fond exasperation in his tone and Hannibal smiled in return.

“You know I’m careful about what I put into my body.”

“That I do.” Will took the container from him and set it aside on the dinner table. “And though I don’t have your cuisine of choice, I do have something else you may like.”

“Oh?”

“Hm. Please make yourself comfortable.” Will told him as he led him back into the living room. “I’ll be right back.” With that, the empath ducked into his kitchen, leaving Hannibal alone under the watchful eyes of seven dogs. He sat down on a chair that was relatively free of dog fur and waited.

His eyes roamed over the room, taking it all in. Will obviously preferred comfort over showmanship, and the place was very cozy. It wasn’t really to Hannibal’s tastes, but he could appreciate it nonetheless. Although, he was a bit biased when it came to all things ‘Will Graham’.

When Will returned, he held two glasses of dark red wine in his hands and was sporting a mischievous smile. He passed one to Hannibal and sat down opposite him, leaning back, watching him intently. Taking his eyes off the enticing figure he presented, Hannibal scented the wine, eyes widening at the aroma.

“It’s my own brew.” Will supplied, grinning wider at Hannibal’s look. He was ignoring his own glass and was focused completely on him. Knowing what he was waiting for, Hannibal took a perfunctory sip and his eyes fluttered close at the *exquisite* taste.

“Will...”

He opened his eyes to see Will watching him still, eyes hooded and dark with pleasure. He took a sip of his own wine, the ruby red liquid sloshing slightly in the clear glass. Hannibal mirrored him, letting it sit on his tongue before swallowing.

“She was a con artist I ran into a few years ago.” Will told him casually and his lips curled into a smile. “Leila, I think. Be positive. Does she suit that refined palate of yours, Hannibal?”

“Yes, Will. Truly delicious.” He replied, affection coloring his voice. “I’m glad you decided to share this with me.”

“It only seemed fair, given how enthusiastic you are about cooking for me.” Will drained the rest of his glass and set it aside, leaning forward to fix stormy eyes on Hannibal. “We do make quite a pair, don’t we?”

“It seems like, between the two of us, nothing will be... wasted.” He finished his own wine and mirrored Will so that they were leaning intimately into each other.

The empath smiled and something stirred behind his eyes, a monster held only barely in check at the moment by tenuous restraint.

“Yes.”

Will suddenly slid to his knees between Hannibal’s legs, using both hands to grab his head and hold it in place. Their eyes were still locked, but Will made no effort to intrude into Hannibal’s headspace, waiting patiently for Hannibal to show him what he wanted to see.

He was only too happy to indulge him.

He unleashed the tight hold he kept on the vicious, bloodthirsty creature inside of him, letting it peer through his eyes at the beautiful man kneeling between his legs, though the position was in no way submissive. He let Will see the darkness inside of him, unveiled the macabre artist who was a much more integral part of him than the persona all others saw. Hannibal allowed the intense pull and helpless fascination he felt for the empath to show in them, let him see just how much he *appreciated* the wonderful gift he’d recently received.

One of the hands holding his head curled around the back of his neck in a wonderfully tight grip as Will’s breathing sped up and his pupils dilated until the blue in his eyes was only a mere hint around the edges. Hannibal placed his own hands on the younger man’s shoulders and held on tightly, just as affected by this strange intimacy.

When Will finally spoke, his voice was deep and dark and hoarse, warming him all over in the best of ways.

“I *see* you, Hannibal,” he breathed. “And you are beautiful. You are *perfection*.”

He surged forward and captured Will’s lips with his own, biting down hard to taste blood. Will tightened his grip and yanked his head back so that the column of Hannibal’s throat was bared to him. Bloodied lips skimmed the pale flesh as Will rose to his feet, and he licked his own blood from Hannibal’s mouth, nipping lightly as he pulled away from the doctor.

For a few seconds, they remained like that, frozen, trying to regain the composure that had deserted them both. Effort that was wasted as Will slid gracefully into Hannibal’s lap, knees

on either side of the older man's thighs, hands caging in the man. He found that he wasn't as averse to the position as he should've been.

"I was right about you. You are lonely, in a way. You seek companionship. You want someone who understands you and accepts you. Someone who can see everything you are and the beauty of it all. Someone who can truly appreciate the art you create." The words were a faint, reverent whisper but Hannibal heard them loud and clear, was lost in their *promise*. When Will lowered his head and brushed his lips against the shell of his ear, a faint shudder ran through him. "*As do I, Hannibal.*"

He swallowed against a dry throat and he could barely recognize his own voice when he spoke, "And what are you proposing?"

Will smiled against his ear and drew back to look Hannibal in the eyes.

"A partnership."

Those two words had no right whatsoever to be as seductive as they were, even if they represented something he'd longed for ever since he met William for the second time in Jack's office. He had expected this to take a lot longer than it did, was prepared to wait for as long as necessary and enjoy the game they were playing. But evidently, Will had other ideas. He couldn't even bring himself to be offended.

Hannibal sighed, eyes half-closing before they flashed open to drink in the beautiful mixture of desire, wonder and sincerity in Will's eyes. This man was going to be the death of him.

"I accept."

Really, what else was he ever going to say?

Will smiled, sharp and wolfish, making no effort to hide his pleasure. A smile tugged persistently at his own lips. But to his disappointment, Will drew away and slid off him, smirking at Hannibal's expression.

"Come now, I have a present for you?"

"Another one?" Marissa Schurr, impaled on a rack of antlers, had been quite the gift. What else would he need?

"Hm, yes and no. Come." Will said as headed towards the kitchen and Hannibal followed, suddenly having a pretty good idea what it was.

He wasn't disappointed when Will opened his fridge taking out a perfectly harvested human heart and offered it to Hannibal. *Marissa's heart*. He accepted it with reverence and cupped it in his hands, imagining Will cutting it out from the warm body of the young woman. The image sent a jolt of pure pleasure through his body.

He gently pressed his lips to the heart, eyes never once leaving Will's, and lightly set it aside on the kitchen counter. He strode forward and pinned Will's slightly smaller frame to the

fridge, cupping his face with his large hands. His next words were whispered against the empath's lips.

"This partnership of ours... I suppose it would be accurate if I were to assume that it extends further than just killing."

Will suddenly grabbed his hips and pulled him forward until they were flush against each other, wrenching a gasp from Hannibal. Will kissed him then, his tongue snaking past his lips to twine with Hannibal's, the cut on his lips bleeding sluggishly into their joined mouths. Will moaned at the taste and kissed him harder, all restraint lost.

When they finally pulled away, both their lips were smeared with the bright red of Will's essence. It was only after their panting eased somewhat that Will answered,

"That would be *quite* accurate."

End Notes

Kudos and comments are much appreciated.

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